Replacement of DEPB scheme

8. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to replace the existing Duty Exemption Pass Book Scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) how the new scheme will be helpful to common man?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The draft new Scheme has been prepared in consultation with the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) and Rajiv Gandhi Foundation/Economic Law Practice. It aims to neutralize un-refunded duties and levies and is aimed at boosting exports by making them more competitive. The draft Scheme is presently under inter-ministerial consultations.

Assistance to States under ASIDE

9. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of assistance available under ASIDE scheme to States for developing export infrastructure and related activities;

(b) the budget allocation for this scheme during the past three years together with the actual amount spent each year;

(c) whether States have asked for more assistance for developing export facilities/infrastructure; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Government of India provides financial assistance to all States and Union Territories, under a scheme titled Assistance to States for Development of Export Infrastructure and Allied Activities (ASIDE) for Development of Export Infrastructure. The outlay of the scheme has two components. 80% of the funds (State Component)

is earmarked for allocation to the States/UTs based on their export performance and the balance 20% (Central Component) and amounts equivalent to the unutilised portion of funds allocated to the States/UTs is retained at the Central level for meeting the requirements of inter state projects, Capital projects taken up in Special Economic Zones (SEZs), activities relating to the promotion of exports from the North Eastern Region as per the guidelines of the Export Development Fund and any other activity considered important by the Central Government from the regional or the national perspective.

(b) The details of funds released under the ASIDE scheme and actual expenditure during the past three years are as follows:

(in Rs. crore)

Year	Release	Total Expenditure during the year
2002-03	325.46	129.71
2003-04	349.84	284.66
2004-05	424.88	330.04

(c) and (d) The allocation of funds out of the State component of ASIDE Scheme to the States/Union territories is made, *inter-alia*, on the basis of the State-wise data for merchandise exports compiled by the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics (DGCI&S). Demands for additional funds by the State Governments under the State component of the ASIDE Scheme are not considered.

Hong Kong Ministerial Conference

10. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) what is India's stand at the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference on agricultural issues;

(b) whether developed countries are ready to reduce their tariffs on agriculture and also to reduce the subsidies on agricultural products both in domestic market and export market; and

(c) whether India will link the agricultural issues with Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) issues?